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ABSTRACT

This specialized teacher training program, submitted by Quincy College, Quincy, Illinois as an entry in the 1973 Distinguished Achievement Award Program, provided perspective teachers with increased opportunities and experiences in specific areas of competency. These areas were early childhood education and remedial reading. The Remedial Reading Center combined learning opportunities with practical experience in working with the testing and tutorial teaching of individual pupils. The Pre-School Learning Center offered student teachers practical training through participation in planning and directing learning experiences. The establishment of these centers provided opportunities for a) research in these fields; b) establishment of requirements for specializations found in team teaching and open-space instructional situations; and c) implementation of innovative, specialized programs. (BRB)

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1973 ENTRY FOR AACTE DISTINGUISHED
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ELEMENTARY TEACHER TRAINING SPECIALIZATION

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QUINCY COLLEGE
QUINCY, ILLINOIS

SP 006 394

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SIGNIFICANCE AND NEED

While there exists today an obvious surplus of teachers in many fields. it is just as true that there is a critical shortage of professionally trained personnel in certain key areas, such as remedial reading and early childhood education. The Board of Higher Education for Illinois pointed this out when they recently recommended cutbacks in most teacher education programs throughout the state, but at the same time placed a high priority on the training of teachers of reading, early childhood, and other specialized areas.

Quincy College has been well assessed of these developments and as the only four year institution of higher learning within a wide range in this section of the state, our Remedial Reading Center and Pre-School Learning Center are making a substantial contribution to the training of qualified reading and early childhood personnel to serve this area. Approximately 120 teacher trainees are involved in each of these programs annually, and as they enter the fields of remedial reading and early childhood education with their added competencies, they affect the development of innumerable children. They will be able to hold responsible positions in many innovative programs found in our elementary schools today and meet the requirements of specialization found in

newer team teaching and open space instructional situations.

A second important function of the Remedial Reading and Pre-School Centers is the contribution they make to the education of children of this area. The College Remedial Reading Center is the only one in this area which employs a one-to-one tutoral method of instruction which is required by many children in need of correctional reading. The Pre-School Learning Center provides a formal educational program for four and five year-olds to help them make the transformation from a "home centered" to a "school centered" environment. The College facilities, professional personnel, and teacher trainees enable this program to reach beyond the scope of traditional day care centers and licensed homes for baby sitting in developing the child.

These Centers will offer valuable in-service opportunities for personnel already involved in reading and early childhood programs. The Remedial Reading and Pre-School Learning Centers provide the proper environment for research in these fields and the new knowledge gained will contribute to the development of reading and early childhood programs throughout this area. During its first year of operation, for example, personnel of area nursery schools, day care centers and licensed homes for baby sitting have repeatedly visited the Pre-School Center to make observations and learn new techniques and methods.

Quincy College is a coeducational, four-year, liberal arts institution of higher learning founded by Franciscans over one hundred years ago. At the present time twenty-five undergraduate degree programs are available to Quincy College students. The College is located in Quincy, Illinois, the largest metropolitan area in the west central section of the State, with a total population of more than 314,000 within a fifty mile radius. The Department of Education is the largest in the College, and at the present time 248 of the 1,800 students enrolled are majoring in this field.

REMEDIAL READING CENTER

RATIONALE AND PROBLEM

One of the most pressing problems in elementary education today is the exceedingly high percentage of children with severe reading difficulties. This was verified by Dr. James E. Allen, Jr., former Assistant Secretary of Education and U. S. Commissioner of Education, when in 1969 he addressed the National Association of State Boards of Education in Chicago and pointed out that one out of every four students nationwide has significant reading deficiencies and that in large cities up to half of the students read below expectations.

Reading is a complex process and often individualized instruction is necessary for correction. The preparation of remedial reading teachers is equally as complex. The reading teacher must be trained in the presentation of all of the reading skills: comprehension, use of the dictionary, content reading, and the whole spectrum of basic reading tools. In addition to this, the teacher must be able to recognize individual causes of poor reading and to apply the necessary remedial or corrective measures.

In a clear majority of cases, teachers have not been prepared professionally for such corrective measures. For over fifteen years the College has offered a course in basic reading principles, The Teaching of Reading and Language Arts. Realizing that this one course can only begin to cover all that should be taught to prospective reading teachers, the College has taken the necessary steps to remedy this situation.

FIRST DEVELOPMENTS (1971-72 ACADEMIC YEAR)

In order to offer a more in-depth training of reading teachers and to fulfill a vital community need, a voluntary pilot program in remedial reading was launched during the 1971-72 school year. During the exploratory phase, the program was limited to the seven private elementary schools in Quincy.

Each child was assigned to a student teacher participating in the College's academic reading program. They worked with the child under the guidance of the director, and with her direction assisted in the diagnosis of reading problems, practiced corrective teaching procedures, and charted the progress of the elementary students.

The corrective reading program differentiates itself from similar programs by realizing the need for a one-to-one student/teacher relationship in order to maximize benefits for both the teacher trainee and remedial reader. Using this approach we believe we will be able to place in school systems throughout the State highly skilled reading personnel who will recognize a student's individual reading deficiencies. This Remedial Reading Program is the only one of its kind in this area which treats corrective reading on an individualized tutorial basis.

PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS (1972-73 ACADEMIC YEAR)

Using the pilot program as a springboard, the College expanded the Remedial Reading Program at the beginning of the summer. During the 1972 Summer Session, a course in Corrective and Remedial Reading was put into effect; and beginning with the 1972-73 school year, this course was offered on a regular basis.

Secondly, the Remedial Reading Center was further developed and

established under the direction of the Department of Education, with a Director holding faculty rank and salaried by the College. Fifty per cent of the Director's work load is devoted directly to the Reading Center, while the other half of the Director's time is spent in teaching reading courses.

The Director serves primarily in a supervisory and guidance capacity. The actual remedial reading therapy is administered on a one-to-one basis by student teachers since a main purpose of the Center is to provide prospective reading teachers with an opportunity for practical experience in corrective reading situations. Approximately 120 student teachers are involved with the activities of the Reading Center.

Another objective of this program is to partially fulfill the corrective reading needs of elementary pupils in this area. Due to the experimental nature of the pilot program, enrollment was limited to twenty. However, the present program has fifty Remedial Reading pupils enrolled in the Center. Unfortunately, however, the Center cannot accomodate all the referrals.

The Center is housed in a remodeled classroom complex in the main academic building on campus. Remodeled and appropriately furnished, this room economically provides an effective and efficient facility for the Remedial Reading lab, conference

rooms and offices.

The Center serves elementary children from the Quincy public and private schools, as well as several from other schools within this vicinity. Between fifty and sixty students in grades one through eight are enrolled in the College Remedial Reading Program.

PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING CENTER

RATIONALE AND PROBLEM

Quincy College recognizes that the need for professionally trained personnel to staff early childhood learning centers is just as crucial as the need for qualified reading teachers. This need has recently been emphasized by Dr. Michael J. Bakalis, State Superintendent of Education for Illinois, in his 1972 State of Education address:

> Earlier I had indicated that pre-kindergarten education is a matter of growing concern to this administration--a concern because we now realize that the first five years of an individual's growth are critical to social, emotional, and intellectual development. The need for programs which prevent irreparable damage to a child because of environmental deprivation has never been clearer.

Even prior to Dr. Bakalis' observation, Quincy College, as a teacher training institution, has been assiduously developing courses and programs to help meet this pressing demand for qualified early childhood personnel. For the past three years, a course in early Childhood Education has been an integral part of

the Department of Education curriculum, and in 1971 a related course in Creative Techniques for Four and Five Year-Olds was introduced to further advance the College's impact in this field.

It was realized from the outset that to be of maximum benefit to the teacher trainees actual inter-relationships with pre-school age children would have to be an essential part of the instructional process. To satisfy this requirement, children from area day care centers and private nursery schools were brought into the college classroom for interchange, and college students made regular visits to day care centers and nursery schools to make observations.

However, this proved to be woefully inadequate. The young children were often so frightened by the strange environment of the college classroom and large number of unfamiliar people present, that no response could be elicited from them. The lack of proper materials and facilities also contributed to the negative results of this approach. On the other hand, college students when visiting area day care centers and nursery schools could only observe what was taking place. They were presented with no real opportunity to actively involve themselves with the youngsters.

Three things soon became evident:

1. Early childhood teacher trainees required a more professional setting in which to work with pre-school youngsters.

2. A model pre-school center was needed in this area to provide guidance for area day care centers and nursery schools.

3. There existed in this area a need to provide a proper educational experience for pre-school age children.

SOLUTION

To meet these three basic needs, the College established a campus Pre-School Learning Center. This is the only college pre-school center serving this area.

The College Pre-School Center is presently housed in a remodeled two story home on campus. Practically all of the labor involved with remodeling the facility was volunteered by members of the College staff, and much of the learning materials were either donated by interested local business concerns or homemade by College students and staff members. The Center consists of a complex of six rooms and a large glassed-in front porch with an enclosed play area adjoining the Center.

The Center conducts two sessions daily, one morning and one afternoon, five days a week. Corresponding with the College academic calendar, the program operates from September through May. During the present semester, twenty-one children are enrolled in the

morning session and sixteen in the afternoon session.

The Director of the Pre-School Center, a member of the Department of Education staff, has had twelve years experience in early childhood teaching and supervision. The Director is assisted by a full-time certified teacher who conducts all sessions in the Center. As with the Remedial Reading program, teacher trainees are actively involved in teaching and working with the children.

This opportunity has been enthusiastically received by the student teachers in the Early Childhood and Creative Techniques courses. Due to the very positive response, it has been necessary to schedule student teacher participation to six per session so that each may receive appropriate guidance and supervision; and also so as not to overwhelm the children by the presence of large groups. With this type of scheduling, the 60 College students involved in the program each semester have sufficient opportunities to gain the necessary clinical experience.

Reaching beyond our own college students, another concern which prompted the establishment of the Pre-School Center was a need for providing professional in-service training for area early childhood personnel. The College Pre-School Center as an educational program should not be confused with nursery schools, day-

care centers, or licensed homes for baby sitting. However, personnel from these programs can effectively utilize methods and techniques employed in the College Pre-School Center and we are working closely with them to make their programs more meaningful for their children. For example, from July through December of 1971, nearly six hundred persons, many of whom are actually involved in the child care field, had visited the Center.

The personnel of the Center have also assisted in the formation of a child care interest group which meets monthly. The purpose of this group is to formally share new ideas, techniques, problems and experineces to improve day care and nursery programs in the area. The Pre-School Director is presently preparing a methods workshop to share with these people. The College Pre-School Center is quickly becoming a nucleus from which new knowledge and clinical experience under the direction of qualified personnel is affecting the early childhood programs of day care centers, nursery schools, and licensed homes for baby sitting throughout the entire area.

The Department of Education of Quincy College has long accepted the goal of providing trained highly competent teachers for service in public and private schools. It has been in the pursuit of that goal that the entire department staff working together under the

direction of fellow staff members, Mrs. Sue Francour and Miss Ann Mary Gullan, conceived the ideas and created the innovative programs in early childhood and reading.

In so doing it was possible also to further serve the community by providing model programs, assistance, research and training in these highly specialized areas. Nursery school and day-care centers in and around Quincy have been most complementary and appreciative of the assistance our center has been able to provide.

The influence of the Reading Center has expanded well out into the community with the director and students providing assistance to teachers and programs in both public and private schools. The Reading Center still in its first year, has hosted reading conferences and workshops including the area Title III reading teachers.

The program has been planned to be self supporting with the pupil fees providing the major financial support. Both facilities have been successful in providing over three quarters of their total budget. The total budget of operating the two centers is nearly $30,000 with that postion paid by the College considered to be an investment in teacher training.

The program for elementary teacher training specialization at Quincy College has been examined and evaluated continuously. Quincy College is small enough that virtually the whole academic community becomes involved in any project undertaken. This has been particularly true in the development and operation of the Early Childhood Learning and Reading Centers. The Education Department staff is striving hard to earn the continued support of all the people who make Quincy College.

PERSONNEL

Director of Pre-School Learning Center

Suzanne Francour, Assistant Professor of Education

Director of Remedial Reading Center

Ann Mary Cullan, Associate Professor of Education

Other department members

Roger Francour, Associate Professor of Education

Marian Reinhart, Associate Professor of Education

Larry Marsh, Assistant Professor of Education

Kenneth Smith, Associate Professor of Education

Darwin Henderson, Instructor in Education

James Bower, Associate Professor of Education
(now acting Dean of Students)

Charles A. Mann, Associate Professor of Education
Chairman, Department of Education

ELEMENTARY TEACHER TRAINING SPECIALIZATION

Quincy College, a small four year institution, has established a Pre-School Learning Center and Remedial Reading Center to substantially contribute to the basic elementary teacher training program. Each center, in conjunction with new courses established in the Department of Education, is providing future teachers with increased opportunities and experiences in highly specialized areas of competency.

The Pre-School Learning Center is located in a remodeled house adjacent to the campus. It has morning and afternoon sessions of pre-school pupils in regular attendance. College students are provided with real and practical training through their participation in planning and directing learning experiences. The Center serves further as a model to area pre-schools and child care centers.

The Remedial Reading Center functions in a similar way to provide learning opportunities along with the practical experience of working with the testing and tutorial teaching of individual pupils. The Reading Center is located in a remodeled classroom area and is well equipped with the latest audio visual equipments used in the teaching of reading. It, too, serves as a model for teachers and reading programs through out a large area around Quincy

Supported by the concept that there can never be a surplus of highly competent teachers, the staff of the Department of

Education has cooperated to establish this improved training program to better prepare future teachers. Teacher candidates select their own area of specialization and the additional hours they spend hard at work on these electives demonstrates their appreciation of the opportunities provided.